Closing of retail petro-outlets

2117. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Retail Outlet in petroleum products sealed and closed by the Oil Companies in Gujarat as on 1 January, 2009;

(b) the details about LPG distributor outlets in Gujarat as on 1 January, 2009; and

(c) how many from above belong to SC and ST categories?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (c) In the State of Gujarat, as on 1st January, 2009, 15 Retail Outlets belonging to public sector oil marketing companies *viz.* Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), have been sealed and closed under Marketing Discipline Guidelines. Out of these, 3 belong to SC category and 2 to ST category.

As on 1st January, 2009, there are 540 Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) distributorships belonging to public sector oil marketing companies, in the State of Gujarat. Out of these, 44 belong to SC category and 57 to ST category. A total number of 16 distributorships belonging to public sector oil marketing companies, in the State of Gujarat, have been sealed and closed under Marketing Discipline Guidelines. Out of these, 1 belongs to SC category and 5 to ST category.

New oil fields

2118. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the allocation of Blocks for exploration of petro-products which took place during the last three years; and

(b) the details of new exploration oil fields found during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) During the last three years (2006-09), a total of 93 Production Sharing Contract (PSCs) have been signed under sixth and seventh bid rounds of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). The details are as under:-

	NELP-VI	NELP-VII	Total
Deepwater	21	11	32
Shallow water	6	7	13
Onland	25	23	48
GRAND TOTAL	52	41	93

(b) During the period 2006-07 to 2008-09, a total of 20 oil and 33 gas discoveries have been made under the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) regime.

Shifting of oil depots to uninhabited area

2119. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to shift oil depots to places which are not thickly populated in order to prevent heavy damage due to accidents; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) The setting up of oil depots depends on the supply-demand situation of the area to be served and the location is determined by various factors like mandatory clearances from Central/State and local authorities. Generally, the depots are set up in scarcely populated areas. However, it is observed that the density of population increases after the depot is commissioned. Shifting of oil and gas depots from any location depend on the recommendations of respective Chief Inspectorate of Factories of State Governments and State Pollution Control Board. It also, depends on the availability of suitable land from the State Government and financial viability of the new location.

Import of natural gas from Iran

2120. SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had any plan to import natural gas from Iran;

(b) if so, whether any agreement in this regard has been signed with Iranian authorities;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the project is still on the anvil;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (f) Government is pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran through Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Gas Pipeline Project. Various important issues, *viz*., pricing of gas, delivery point of gas, project structure, security of supplies, payment of transportation tariff and transit fees for passage of natural gas through Pakistan, etc., are under discussion amongst the participating countries. Such multilateral projects involve protracted discussions, as all the aspects have to be carefully examined and deliberated upon to the satisfaction of the participating countries to protect each country's interests and to avoid any problems in the future in the successful operation of the Project. Finalization of the agreement can be achieved when satisfactory resolution of the issues